

# SMART FAQ — Program Overview, Billing and Payments

## Abbreviations and Terms

**MA DOER:** Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources

**SMART:** Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target Program

**Preliminary SOQ (Statement of Qualification):** Your project has a reservation in the SMART program, and still needs to finish the claims process before you can receive your incentive payments.

**Final SOQ (Statement of Qualification):** Your project has completed the SMART application process, and it's up to National Grid to begin issuing payments. Our timeline is currently 3-4 billing cycles after receiving the final SOQ from the DOER.

**BTM/Behind the Meter Projects:** These are projects that are connected behind an existing load meter (i.e.: an existing home or business that receives the energy that's generated). Behind the Meter Solar Tariff Generation Unit Compensation Rate = (Base Compensation Rate + Compensation Rate Adders) – (Current Volumetric Delivery Rates + Three-year Average of Basic Service)

**Standalone Projects:** These are projects that have little or no load (i.e.: large solar fields, energy gets sent directly to the grid)

**SPA:** Solar Program Administrator

**ATI:** Authority to Interconnect- when National Grid gives the project permission to turn on and start generating electricity

**AOBC:** Alternative on-bill credit

**PCT:** Payment Credit Transfer Form

**ATI:** Authority to Interconnect

**ISA:** Interconnection Service Agreement

**Base Compensation Rate/BCR:** Base Compensation Rates are based on a facility's electric distribution company and Capacity Block in the SMART program.

**VOE:** Value of Energy (approximates the avoided costs of electricity from a kWh of on-site load offset by a solar facility and is equal to the sum of the following: current volumetric distribution rate, current volumetric transmission rate, current volumetric transition rate,

three-year average Basic Service Rate). It's a flat rate subject to change, that is calculated based on each electric distribution company's current rates as approved by the DPU. VOE – determined as set forth below:

1. For Standalone STGUs that are net metered pursuant to the Company's Net Metering tariff, the VOE will be the applicable net metering credit.
2. For Standalone STGUs that are QFs or On-site Generating Facilities pursuant to 220 CMR 8.00 but are not net metered pursuant to the Company's Net Metering tariff, the VOE will be the rate applicable under the Company's QF tariff. The incentive payment is inclusive of the QF payment.
3. For STGUs that are located behind the Customer's electric service meter and have On-Site Load other than parasitic or station load, the VOE will be the sum of the current applicable distribution kWh charge, transmission kWh charge, transition kWh charge, and the average of the Basic Service kWh charge for the three calendar years immediately preceding the year in which the Statement of Qualification is issued. For purposes of this tariff, a Customer's current applicable distribution kWh charge, transmission kWh charge, and transition kWh charge will be those charges in effect applicable to the Customer during the previous calendar year. The VOE applicable to the STGU will be specified on the Statement of Qualification, as provided by the Company in Appendix A to this tariff and will not change during the period of time during which the STGU is receiving Incentive Payments pursuant to Section 7.0, unless directed to change by DOER.
4. For AOBC Generation Units, the VOE will be equal to the Basic Service rate applicable to the AOBC Generation Unit's rate class in effect during the billing period, as established by the Company's Basic Service tariff.
5. BTM AOBC incentive rate is provided in the final SOQ for the full incentive term, and does not fluctuate, unlike standalone systems. The value of the AOBC is equal to the basic service supply rate at the time

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of generation. If applying for BTM AOBC, there can be no additional non-SMART solar behind the same point of interconnection.

- Base Compensation Rates and, if applicable, Compensation Rate Adders, and/or Greenfield Subcontractors are determined as authorized in the Statement of Qualification, and those rates will not change during the period of time in which the STGU is receiving Incentive Payment pursuant to Section 7.0 unless as directed by the DOER, SPA or the Department. The applicable distribution, transmission and transition charges, and the three-year average of Basic Service rates will change once annually in Appendix A to this tariff.

**QF:** Qualifying Facility

**NM:** Net Metered, Net Metering

**STGU:** Solar Tariff Generation Unit

**REC:** Renewable Energy Credits

**ACH:** Automated Clearing House

**PCT:** Payment Credit Transfer Form

**PV:** photovoltaic (solar)

## Program Overview and Timelines

### What is MA SMART?

MA SMART is a long-term solar incentive program.

<http://masmartsolar.com/>

- Projects receive a total compensation for 10 or 20 years depending on size (25 kW and under 10 years, above 25 kW 20 years)

### Who administers the MA SMART program?

MA SMART is an incentive program that is managed by the Solar Program Administrator, CLEARResult. Developers apply to MA SMART in parallel with applying to National Grid for interconnection. CLEARResult manages the SMART portion of the application and works with National Grid and the Department of Energy Resources to approve. National Grid will apply the incentives within 3-4 billing cycles after the application receives its final SOQ from CLEARResult and the DOER.

**CLEARResult:** handles application questions, system eligibility, overall program information

**National Grid:** handles metering, billing, payments

### How do I participate in MA SMART?

**Please note:** Existing systems currently enrolled in the SREC credit program are not eligible for the MA SMART incentive program.

To participate in MA SMART, you will need to complete two separate applications through CLEARResult and an Interconnection Application through National Grid.

- Apply for a MA SMART incentive reservation through the Solar Program Administrator's website <http://www.masmartsolar.com>
- Apply for system interconnection through the National Grid interconnection portal at <https://ngus.force.com/s/>. On your application, please indicate whether you intend to participate in the MA SMART program.
- Once your system has been installed and we have granted your permission to operate, file your final incentive claim with the MA SMART Solar Program Administrator.
- Once your incentive claim application is approved by the MA SMART Solar Program Administrator, we will automatically be notified. You should expect to start receiving incentive checks within 3 to 4 billing cycles.

### Why is it necessary to submit recent utility bills with the application?

This will expedite the owner of the PV system in getting their incentive payment. A recent bill is required to show active service. If issues are found during the application process with an inactive account number, the system will not be incentivized until this is resolved.

### What is the Payment Effective Date for my project?

For projects 25kW or less in blocks 1-8, initial payments will be backdated to the date their generation meter was set. All other projects will receive payments beginning the next billing cycle date after Final SOQ is received. For more information, please review the link below.

<https://ngus.force.com/s/article/Massachusetts-SMART-Incentive-Dates>

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## MA SMART timelines and delays

MA SMART is a complex program with many steps and processes. We're working hard to make this process more efficient and appreciate your patience.

We cannot provide a firm timeline since every project is different.

If you have questions, please open a ticket for our Distributed Generation team here: <https://ngus.force.com/s/>

## If a customer wants to speak to someone in DG is there a contact number?

Please open a ticket for our Distributed Generation team at <https://ngus.force.com/s/>

## Billing and Net Metering Credits

### How does the bill work?

The bill for MA SMART customers has multiple functions.

- It shows the monthly usage, like non-solar bills.
- It shows the monthly solar generation.
- It also shows what amount your system will earn for the monthly payment, like a receipt.

Depending on your bill cycle date, you will either receive your monthly SMART incentive payment in the middle of the month, or at the beginning of the following month. Payments are issued for the prior month's generation.

### When will I get my bill?

MA SMART customers will receive their bill at the same billing cycle as usual, available online or by mail.

If you have not received a bill, please open a ticket:

<https://ngus.force.com/s/>

### Why do I still have a bill if I have solar?

You will only receive a \$0 bill or a credit on your bill if you generate more solar electricity than you use throughout

the month. Depending on how your solar system is sized, it might not cover all your usage. It will also vary by month and how many sunny days there were.

### How much energy did I generate last month?

The bill should display how much solar energy was generated last month based on your generation meter. Also, if your installer installed a production meter with a website login, you can check your generation there as well.

### How does metering and billing work with MA SMART?

Your project will receive Authority to Interconnect (ATI) from National Grid before you receive the Final SOQ for MA SMART. One of the requirements of MA SMART is that the project has ATI. There is a delay between National Grid allowing a customer to generate and the application receiving the Final SOQ from CLEAResult.

For more information on Incentive Effective Dates:

<https://ngus.force.com/s/>

### What is the Distributed Solar Charge?

This rate, per Department of Public Utilities program design, is intended for the operation of the MA SMART program.

Effective for MA SMART customers on October 1st, 2020, the way the Distributed Solar Charge is calculated will be changing. Up until now, the charge was distributed evenly across all National Grid customers. Starting October 1st, 2020, the rate will be calculated differently for MA SMART customers only. The Distributed Solar Charge kWh billing changes are:

1. For Standalone SMART accounts 60 kW AC and greater (interval-metered), the DSC will be assessed against kWh provided by a "load only" channel of data.
2. For Behind-the-Meter SMART accounts (whether they are interval or dial-metered), the DSC kWh will be calculated by subtracting the Utility Generation Meter kWh from the Utility Service Meter kWh.

### MA SMART Incentive Program

Type of Service	Current Reading	-	Previous Reading	=	Difference	x	Meter Multiplier	=	Total Usage
Energy	73533 <i>Actual</i>		84429 <i>Actual</i>		-10896		1		-10896 kWh
<b>Total Energy</b>									<b>0 kWh</b>

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3. For Standalone SMART accounts less than 60 kW AC (dial-metered), there will be no change to the way the DSC kWh is calculated.

The billing change will be especially noticeable on accounts that typically over-generate every month. The customer charge and net metering credit (if applicable) will be displayed as usual, but they may also have a bill line item for the Distributed Solar Charge. Accounts that normally bill with positive usage will have all their delivery charges based on the Utility Service Meter kWh, but the kWh for the DSC charge may be different, based on the new formulas.

In addition, if there are satellite accounts tied to a host account, any net metering credit to be transferred to satellite accounts will be reduced by the amount of the distributed solar charge, just as the customer charge reduces the credit amount to be transferred to satellite accounts.

## **Why am I getting so many bills at once? How much do I owe? Why does it say \$0 for my MA SMART payment amount?**

We've recently made changes to how we process SMART bills and have recently released bills. You might be receiving multiple bills at once as the system catches up. This is a temporary and one-time occurrence. You only owe the amount of the bill from the last billing cycle.

Please keep in mind that until we have a final incentive rate for your project, your bill will show a \$0 incentive payment amount.

## **How do I receive a refund for solar credits?**

Based on the program rules, we cannot refund net metering credits. They will build up on the account and never expire.

If you'd like to transfer them to a friend or neighbor, you can fill out a Schedule Z form.

If you have questions on unallocated AOBC credits, please reach out to our DG team.

## **When will I see credits on my account/why don't I see credits on my account?**

As soon as you have a net meter installed, you should begin to see a change in your electric bill. A credit will build up if you generate more electricity than you use.

Please keep in mind that solar generation is down in the winter AND electric usage generally increases, so most customers will not see a credit on their bill during the winter months. This will change in the spring and summer months.

## **Payments**

### **Why haven't I gotten my MA SMART incentives?**

Until we have received the Final SOQ ("Final Statement of Qualification") sent from CLEARResult, we will not know your final incentive rate, and thus we aren't currently able to calculate how much you will earn until we have the Final SOQ.

If you're wondering when we will receive the Final SOQ, please reach out to your solar developer or CLEARResult.

**National Grid does not issue or provide the Final SOQ.**

### **When will I receive my initial payments?**

If we have the final SOQ for the project, it will take up to 3-4 billing cycles for the initial payments to be processed starting from the date the Final SOQ is issued. If we don't have the Final SOQ yet, then we cannot begin issuing payments until we have it. This is because the Final SOQ has the project's final incentive rate. If you have any questions or concerns about your specific situation, please reach out to our DG team.

### **How is the rate of SMART solar credits determined?**

The SMART incentive value is determined and provided to National Grid by CLEARResult. Information on how the incentive values are determined can be found here:

**<https://clearResult5.sharepoint.com/:x/s/MassSMARTSolar/ERxwXZde-5pJvMdkuOULQzkBtWXbog290Gn17p7dM6ia8w?rtime=3cmSm8qe10g>**